

II. REMARKS

A. Introduction

Claims 1-25 are pending. The drawings were objected to on formal grounds. Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 10, 11, 13, 15 and 19-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,844,813 to *Hardman*. Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,575,363 to *Leason et al.* Claims 3, 9, 12 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of *Hardman*. Claims 3, 9, 12 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious in view of *Hardman*. Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Hardman* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,377,589 to *Knight et al.* Claim 18 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over *Leason et al.* in view of *Hardman*.

In response to the Office action, applicants cancel claims 1-16 and 19-25, amend claims 17 and 18 and add new claims 26-28, all of which applicants believe are in condition for allowance over the art of record. No new matter is entered.

B. Objection to the Drawings

Replacement sheets 1/5 and 5/5 are submitted in response to the formal objections thereto. Applicants respectfully submit the drawings, as amended, overcome the Examiner's objection.

C. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102 and §103

Independent claim 17 requires, *inter alia*, a vending network comprising a plurality of vending machines ... forming a wireless relay network, one of the vending machines in the wireless relay network for receiving vending machine information from a plurality of the other vending machines in the wireless relay network having vending machine information to report and reporting the received vending machine information at a predetermined time. Applicants respectfully submit that no reference or combination of references in the art of record discloses, teaches or in any way suggests at least these features of applicants claimed invention as set forth in independent claim 17. Thus, applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 17 and all claims dependent thereon are on condition for allowance.

D. Conclusion

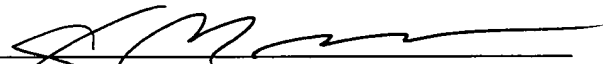
Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Applicants believe the case is in condition for allowance and respectfully request withdrawal of the drawing objection and claim rejections and allowance of the pending claims.

Applicants hereby petition for any extension of time which may be required to maintain the pendency of this case, and any required fee, except for the Issue Fee, for such extension is to be charged to **Deposit Account No. 19-3878**.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if it would in any way advance prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: August 4, 2005


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